

chest, and rest of underparts much greyer, and the rufescent margin to the inner web of the quills, so conspicuous in *T. blanfordi*, barely indicated. Iris brown; bill black; legs grey.

Total length 7·5 inches, culmen 0·88, wing 3·0, tail 3·4, tarsus 1·2.

XX.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 217.]

34. *Chapman (F. M.) on the Birds of Greenland.*

[Report on Birds received through the Peary Expeditions to Greenland. By Frank M. Chapman. Bull. Am. Mus. N. H. xii. pp. 219-244 (1899).]

Mr. Chapman reports on three collections of birds made during the recent Peary expeditions to Greenland, and presented to the American Museum of Natural History by Mr. M. K. Jesup. The 'Peary' collection contains 82 specimens obtained at various localities; in the 'Dyche' collection are 244 specimens acquired by Professor L. L. Dyche during the Peary Expedition of 1895; and in the "Figgins" collection are 162 specimens collected by Mr. J. D. Figgins, who was naturalist to the Peary Expedition of 1896. The whole series, comprising about 500 specimens, is referred by the writer to 48 species, none of which—as might have been anticipated—are new to science; but many of them are of great interest, as they are examples of birds in immature plumages or changes of dress which are not often obtained. Mr. Figgins's excellent field-notes are indicated by his initials.

35. *Chubb's Indexes to Hume's 'Stray Feathers.'*

[Stray Feathers, a Journal of Ornithology for India and its Dependencies. Edited by Allan Hume, C.B. Index to Vol. XI., and Systematic and General Index to Vols. I.-XI. By Charles Chubb. London, 1899: Quaritch.]

Mr. Charles Chubb, who is favourably known to all frequenters of the Bird-room of the British Museum, has

done well in preparing the two works mentioned above. The first is an index to the eleventh and last volume of 'Stray Feathers' (unfortunately incomplete); the second is a systematic and alphabetical index to the whole series of eleven volumes of the same work. Mr. Chubb could hardly have spent his "leisure time during the past two years" in a manner more useful to ornithologists, who, we are sure, will be grateful to him for the facilities thus afforded for reference to this important work.

'Stray Feathers' is a mine of wealth to those who seek information on Indian birds, though somewhat difficult of access, and Mr. Chubb has now provided a much-needed spade for digging into what was hard to penetrate without it. Dr. Bowdler Sharpe has helped Mr. Chubb with encouragement and advice, and Mr. Quaritch has aided by publishing the results of his labours.

36. *Cory on the Birds of Eastern North America.*

[The Birds of Eastern North America. Pt. I. Water-birds; Pt. II. Land-birds; Key to the Families and Species. By Charles B. Cory. Field Columbian Museum, Chicago: 1899, 8vo.]

This excellent compendium is on the lines of the author's useful booklets, 'How to know the Shore-birds' and 'How to know the Ducks, Swans, and Geese of North America,' noticed in 'The Ibis,' 1898, p. 300. It is profusely illustrated, the descriptions are remarkably concise, and a more valuable hand-book can scarcely be imagined. We are confronted by our old enemy "Podicipidæ" for Podicipedidæ; but then, according to the A. O. U. creed (canon xxxi.), a name employed by some one "with little Latin and less Greck" must not be rejected, nor—as it would seem—amended. Mr. Cory naturally follows the Code.

37. *Dubois' 'Synopsis Avium.'*

[Synopsis Avium. Nouveau Manuel d'Ornithologie par Alphonse Dubois. Fasc. I., Psittaci, Scansores, Pici. Bruxelles, 1899. 8vo, pp. 80.]

The completion of the 'Catalogue of Birds in the British Museum' has rendered the compilation of new Synopses

Avium a comparatively easy task, and we are not surprised that ornithologists on the Continent should be inclined to avail themselves of the assistance thus rendered to them by British energy, nor do we regret it; for every enterprise that tends to render the study of our branch of science more easy and popular will always, if well carried out, receive the support of this Journal and of the Union to which it belongs.

M. Dubois commences his work with the Psittaci, Scau-
sores, and Pici, and his task is considerably lightened,
as nearly all the families of these groups have been mono-
graphed, and the species are tolerably well known. Besides
the name adopted, only the principal synonyms and the
patriæ are given. The "subspecies" are designated "varie-
ties": a practice which is not commendable, as the latter
term would be better restricted to individual variations of
form and colour. Altogether 1105 species of 180 genera
are comprised in the first Fasciculus. This contains 80 pp.
and a coloured plate of *Tiga borneonensis*, which seems
scarcely different from *T. javaneusis*. The work will be
completed in "about 7 numbers," to appear every quarter.

38. *Evans and Buckley on the Shetland Islands.*

[A Vertebrate Fauna of the Shetland Islands. By Arthur H. Evans
and T. E. Buckley. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1899.]

This is the first of the series in which the name of
Mr. Harvie-Brown does not appear on the title-page; but
the influence of our hard-working colleague is plainly seen
in the accounts of many outlying islets and skerries which
he visited in his yacht, as well as in particulars respecting
the southern portion of Mainland, a district almost unknown
to the ornithologist. To his companion, Mr. Norrie, the
work is indebted for the numerous photographs which em-
bellish its pages, and the frontispiece—a nesting-place of the
Kittiwake—by Mr. Oswin Lee, is an admirable example of
mezzotint. Since 1887 Mr. Evans has been systematically
exploring the islands of the group, aided by Mr. Buckley,
Mr. Godfrey, and others; and for thoroughly careful work

this volume is in every respect equal to its predecessors. The earlier labours of Saxby, the Edmondston family, Garriock, and others, can never be forgotten when the Shetland Islands are mentioned, and this excellent treatise forms their fitting complement. The birds occupy pp. 69–215, the bulk of the work; the descriptive portion forms an admirable guide-book; and it is almost needless to say that there is a coloured map, as well as a full index.

39. *Finn on a supposed new Indian Drongo.*

[On a new Species of Bhimraj (*Dissemurus*), with some Observations on the so-called family Dicruridæ. By F. Finn, B.A., F.Z.S. J. A. S. B. lxviii. pt. ii. p. 119.]

Mr. Finn continues his curious discoveries in the Indian avifauna. A new Bhimraj (*Dissemurus alcocki*) is founded upon a bird obtained alive from the Gorakhpur district, and now in the Calcutta Museum. It has white edgings to the wings and a whitish belly. Other similar specimens have been received from the same locality.

40. *Finsch on the Species of Theristicus.*

[Ueber die Arten der Gattung *Theristicus* Wagl. Von Dr. O. Finsch. Notes Leyden Mus. xxi. p. 23.]

Dr. Sharpe has united *Theristicus branickii* Berl. & Stolz. to *T. melanopsis*, as its younger form. Dr. Finsch maintains that *T. branickii* is an unquestionably valid species, of which the Leyden Museum has two adult specimens (♂ et ♀) from Peru (*Whitely*); and he adds to the list of the genus a fourth species, *T. colombianus*, based on an example in the same Museum acquired, in 1867, from "Columbia." Notes on and descriptions of all four species are added.

41. *Finsch on the Genus Gracula.*

[Das Genus *Gracula* Linn., und seine Arten nebst Beschreibung einer neuen Art. Von Dr. O. Finsch. Notes Leyden Mus. xxi. p. 1.]

We are pleased to note that Dr. Finsch follows Count Salvadori in reviving the good old-fashioned Linnean genus

Gracula, which ought never to have been superseded by *Mainatus* or *Eulabes*. He now reviews the species and recognizes 14 of them; describing as new *G. batuensis*, from the Batu Islands, on the north-west coast of Sumatra.

42. *Finsch's Review of his Forty Years' Work.*

O. Finsch: Systematische Uebersicht der Ergebnisse seiner Reisen und schriftstellerischen Thätigkeit (1859-1899). 8vo. Berlin, 1899.]

The excellent work in zoology and anthropology accomplished by our old correspondent, Dr. Finsch, during the past 40 years, well deserves this permanent record, which is, at the same time, very useful to students for purposes of reference. In "Birds," as we all know, Dr. Finsch has been specially active, and his papers, which form a goodly list, show his researches in Greenland, Europe, Africa, Asia, Indo-Malaysia, New Guinea, the Pacific Islands, and New Zealand. According to the alphabetical list given, the new species described by Dr. Finsch are 158 in number. We cordially wish him a long period of fresh activity in the Leyden Museum.

43. *Gosse on the Birds of Aconcagua.*

[Notes on the Natural History of the Aconcagua Valleys. By Philip Gosse. Reprinted from Mr. E. A. FitzGerald's 'The Highest Andes,' 1899. 8vo. London, 1899.]

Mr. Gosse sends us a separate copy of the above-named Notes. The portion relating to "Birds" occupies 11 pages of the Appendix, and contains an account of two collections: the one made in the valleys round the base of the great mountain, and the other during Mr. Gosse's two months' residence at Lujan, in the province of Mendoza. In the first list 26 species are mentioned, and field-notes are given relating to each of them; all being well-known Chilian species, and such as would be expected to occur in the Mendozan Andes. *Atticora cyanoleuca* was observed up to 11,000 feet; *Oreotrochilus leucopleurus* was found breeding in the Inca Valley in December and January, and another Humming-bird (probably *Patagona gigas*) was noticed but

not obtained. *Thinocorys orbignyana* was met with at 18,000 feet. Only one Duck, *Anas cristata*, is mentioned.

The second list enumerates 11 species obtained at Lujan, 15 miles south of Mendoza, and contains nothing remarkable. "*Lamprotes bonariensis*" is, we suspect, an error for "*Tanagra darwini*," for the former is a Brazilian species which would not be likely to occur in Western Argentina.

44. Hall on Australian Birds.

[A Key to the Birds of Australia and Tasmania, with their Geographical Distribution in Australia. By Robert Hall. 8vo. Melbourne and London, 1899.]

This appears to be a useful manual of the 767 known birds of Australia, with special reference to their distribution. The nomenclature and arrangement of the British Museum Catalogue are adopted. The continent of Australia is divided into the "Eyrean," "Torresian," and "Bassian" subregions, as proposed by Prof. Spencer; and these subregions are again separated into nine "areas," which are designated by numbers and are so indicated for the localities of the species. It would have been better, we think, to have added references to all the species *not* included in the B. M. Catalogue (e. g. *Stipiturus ruficeps*), to avoid any difficulty in finding them.

45. Hall on the Changes of Plumage in *Malurus*.

[Notes on *Malurus gouldii* and *Malurus cyaneus*, with special reference to Changes in Plumage. By Robert Hall. Proc. R. Soc. Victoria, new ser. xii. (1899) p. 59.]

The author discusses the vexed question of the changes of plumage in this genus at some length, and considers that the annual double moult of the male is now an established fact.

46. Hartert on Birds from the Gold-Coast Colony.

[List of a Collection of Birds made at Gambaga, in the Gold Coast Hinterland, by Capt. W. Giffard. Nov. Zool. vi. p. 403 (1899).]

There is still much to be done in working out the exact

localities and ranges of the birds of West Africa, and we are glad to see Mr. Hartert engaged in cataloguing local collections from this quarter. Capt. Giffard's scene of operations was mostly Gambaga, in the interior of the Gold-Coast Colony ($10^{\circ} 50'$ N. lat. and about 1° W. long.), though a few of his specimens were obtained elsewhere. The collection comprises examples of 150 species. The three novelties have been already described in the Bull. B. O. C. (x. p. v; Ibis, 1900, pp. 181-2), but Mr. Hartert introduces many valuable notes and comments in his present paper, especially as regards distribution.

47. Hartert on Birds from Cape York.

[On some Birds from Cape York, North Queensland. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. vi. p. 423, 1899.]

We have here notes on specimens "from a large and fine collection" made by Mr. Albert S. Meeks' collectors at Cape York in June and July 1898. Mr. Hartert writes on 25 species; among which he now describes *Artamus leucorhynchus parvirostris* and *Zosterops westernensis vegeta* as new subspecies. *Poëphila nigrotecta* from the same collection has been already characterized (Bull. B. O. C. viii. p. lix).

48. Hartert on *Myzomela rubro-cucullata*.

[On *Myzomela rubro-cucullata* Tristr. By Ernst Hartert. Nov. Zool. vi. p. 428 (1899).]

Mr. Hartert suspects that *Myzomela rubro-cucullata* Tristr. (Ibis, 1889, p. 228) is not really from St. Aignan (as was supposed by the describer), but more probably from one of the Solomon group. He has examined the type now in the Liverpool Museum.

49. Japp on Cuckoos.

[Our Common Cuckoo and other Cuckoos and Parasitical Birds; an attempt to reach a True Theory of them by comparative Study of Habit and Function: with a thorough Criticism and Exposure of Darwin's

Views and Romanes's Views and those of their Followers. By Alexander H. Japp, LL.D., F.R.S.E. 8vo. London, 1899.]

The title sufficiently explains the aim of this preposterous work, in which we are assured, with irritating iteration, that Darwin "was not a thinker." Gould, too, "was no thinker, and was mostly either very weak or very far wrong when he attempted anything outside his proper province." Inaccurate and garbled "quotations" abound, and the 'Zoologist' for 1883 will be searched in vain for anything like the assertions ascribed to Mr. Bidwell on p. 51; while absolute misstatements are sadly frequent. References to p. 10 and p. 31 would lead the reader to suppose that the male Cuckoo "deposits"—if he does not actually *lay*—"his eggs in other birds' nests." The index is worthy of the rest of the book, and to say more about the whole production would be a waste of our space.

50. *Le Souëf on Birds from North Australia.*

[Ornithological Notes from the Northern Territory. A List of the Birds, with the Nests and Eggs, obtained by Mr. E. Olive on the Katherine River. By D. Le Souëf, C.M.Z.S. Victorian Nat. xvi. no. 4.]

Mr. Le Souëf writes useful remarks on the more important birds obtained by Mr. E. Olive while collecting on the Katherine River, Northern Territory, from October 1898 to January 1899. The collector's field-notes are appended, and the nests and eggs are described.

51. *Martorelli on the Pattern of the Plumage of Birds.*

[Le Forme e le Simmetrie delle Macchie nel Piumaggio. Memoria Ornitologica del Prof. Giacinto Martorelli. Mem. Soc. Ital. Sci. Nat. vi. fasc. 2, 1898.]

Only an ornithologist who is conversant with all the niceties of the Italian language can do justice to this recondite treatise; and in the hope of obtaining the assistance of one thus qualified we have delayed our notice for a twelvemonth, but in vain. The author's conclusions are 22 in number; the first being that the spots or markings on

the feathers have an organic cause which regulates their shape and their successive alteration. There is a fine coloured frontispiece of *Pernis celebensis* and *Spizaëtus lanceolatus*, and many excellent woodcuts embellish the text.

52. *Meinertzhagen and Hornby on Lapland.*

[Bird Life in an Arctic Spring. The Diaries of Dan Meinertzhagen and R. P. Hornby. 8vo. London, 1899.]

Parental affection has willed that the diary of Dan Meinertzhagen should be printed unrevised, just as it remained when death carried off one of our most promising young naturalists, and no one who knew the accomplished draughtsman and attractive enthusiast can fail to sympathize with the desire. Under the circumstances, the work must not be seriously criticised; but we can cordially recommend it to all lovers of nature, as showing the foundation upon which, if he had been spared, a young genius would have raised an enduring edifice. Some of the many illustrations are admirable, and nearly equal to those by Wolf at a similar age.

53. *Munich Ornithological Union, Annual Reports, 1897-8.*

[Jahresbericht des Ornithologischen Vereins München, für 1897 und 1898. Herausgegeben vom derzeitigen Vorsitzenden Dr. med. C. Parrot. 8vo. München, 1899.]

Munich has always seemed to us rather "out in the cold" as regards Ornithology, for, except Spix's types, mostly in a wretched and neglected condition, there was little, that we knew of, to attract the bird-lover to the capital of Bavaria. This has now, however, an Ornithological Union, and two years' of its "Proceedings" are reported in the present volume, which contains several papers of considerable interest, mostly relating to the birds of the country. Dr. C. Parrot appears to have been the worthy founder of the institution, and is the editor of its journal.

54. *North's Ornithological Notes.*

[Ornithological Notes. By Alfred J. North, C.M.Z.S. VIII. Description of a new Species of Honey-eater from North Queensland. IX. Description of the Nest and Eggs of *Micræca pallida* De Vis. Records Australian Mus. iii. 1899, pp. 106, 107.]

Our ever active correspondent describes *Ptilotis leilavalensis* as a new species from Northern Queensland, and the previously unknown nest and eggs of *Micræca pallida* from the same country.

55. *Oberholser on Birds from the Cameroons.*

[Notes on Birds from the Cameroons District, West Africa. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 11.]

The author writes on a collection of 59 specimens of birds, nearly all from Ebfulla, about a hundred miles inland in the Cameroons District of West Africa, and refers them to 32 species, none of which are new, though several are of interest. A new genus "*Eurillas*" is proposed for *Andropadus virens* Cassin, of the family Pycnonotidæ. Mr. Oberholser is strongly of opinion that *Gymnobucco peli* is specifically distinct from *G. calvus*, but nevertheless he calls his specimens from the Cameroons which agree in characters with *G. peli* by the latter name.

56. *Oberholser on Birds from Liberia.*

[A List of Birds collected by Mr. R. P. Currie in Liberia. By Harry C. Oberholser. Proc. U.S. Nat. Mus. xxii. p. 25.]

This collection, which was made at Mount Coffee on the St. Paul river, contains 57 birds, which are referred to 39 species and subspecies, 4 of them being described as new—*Dendromus caroli arizelus*, *Anthreptes idius*, *Dicrurus modestus atactus*, and *Fraseria prosphora*. Two new generic terms are also proposed—*Horizocerus* for *Toccos hartlaubi* Gould, and *Stelgidillas* (lege *Stelgidellus*?) for *Andropadus gracilirostris* Strickl. We can see no object in casually making new genera for slightly aberrant species, which are better left as they were, unless the whole group to which they belong is completely revised. We also disapprove of the author's practice

of beginning his lists at the "wrong end," which is very confusing.

57. *Osgood on Chamæa fasciata.*

[*Chamæa fasciata* and its Subspecies. By Wilfred H. Osgood. Proc. Biol. Soc. Washington, xiii. p. 41.]

The Wren-Tits (*Chamæa*) of California have been divided into two subspecies, *C. fasciata typica* and *C. f. henshawi*. Mr. Osgood has discovered that the latter, from Southern California, is really the typical form, and he, therefore, proposes to rename the dark northern form *C. f. phæa*.

58. *Palmer on the Birds of the Pribilof Islands.*

[The Fur-Seals and Fur-Seal Islands of the North Pacific Ocean. By David Starr Jordan. Part 3, Chap. xvii. The Avifauna, by William Palmer. 4to. Washington, 1899.]

The author of this interesting report to the Fur-Seal Commission of 1896-97 was on the Pribilof Islands from May 27 to August 11, and seems to have added about 20 species to the list of birds observed there by Mr. H. W. Elliott and others. Mr. Palmer distinguishes the Turnstone of the area north of Hudson Bay from the Mackenzie river eastward and from the Atlantic watershed to the Falklands as *Arenaria morinella*, and devotes several pages to the maintenance of his contention. There are some interesting illustrations and diagrams of the development of feathers. Mr. Palmer holds some novel and decidedly bold opinions on the subject of the migration of Pribilof birds.

59. *Pearson on the Islands of Barents Sea.*

['Beyond Petsora Eastward': Two Summer Voyages to Novaya Zemlya and the Islands of Barents Sea. By Henry J. Pearson. With Appendices on the Botany and Geology. By Col. H. W. Feilden. 4to. London, 1899.]

The interesting expeditions made by Mr. Pearson and his companions to the above-mentioned district were described in this Journal for 1896, pp. 199-225, and 1898, pp. 185-208, though chiefly, of course, as regards the ornithological results,

for our available space is limited. Plenty of material therefore remained to be expanded into the present agreeable narrative of life and exploration, especially as regards the almost unvisited islands of Dolgoi and Waigatch, to the north and east of the mouth of the Petchora. Kolguev Island, moreover, had been by no means exhausted by Mr. Trevor-Battye; and the south-west of Gooseland—the portion of Novaya Zemlya to the south of the Matyushin Strait—well repaid investigation, while the east side of the northern island, Lütkeland, was also visited. The book is profusely illustrated from photographs, many of them very beautiful; there are several maps and plans; the frontispiece gives coloured figures of twelve eggs of the Little Stint; and the index is excellent. It is a pity that shoal water precluded a landing on the Yalmal Peninsula; but, even as it stands, the book fills in a very important gap in our knowledge of Arctic geography as well as natural history. The appendices by Col. Feilden have received very high praise from competent authorities, and the title of the work, which is from ‘Paradise Lost,’ book x., was suggested by him.

60. *Peel on the Birds of Somaliland.*

[Somaliland: being an Account of Two Expeditions into the Far Interior, together with a complete List of every Animal and Bird known to inhabit that Country, and a List of the Reptiles collected by the Author. By C. A. V. Peel, F.Z.S. London, 1900.]

Mr. Peel's octavo volume, of 345 pages, contains a narrative of two excursions made into the far interior of Somaliland in 1895 and 1897 (no exact dates specified), and is chiefly occupied with accounts of his adventures in the pursuit of the larger game. In an Appendix is given a list of the mammals and birds of Somaliland. The list of birds (in the preparation of which the author acknowledges the assistance of Dr. Bowdler Sharpe and Mr. Hartert) contains the names of about 295 species, with localities and a few field-notes.

61. *Radde's 'Museum Caucasianum.'*

[Die Sammlungen des Kaukasischen Museums, im Vereine mit Special-Gelehrten bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Dr. Gustav Radde. Band I. Zoologie, von Dr. Gustav Radde. Tiflis, 1899.]

This is the first of a series of six quarto volumes, which the accomplished Director of the Caucasian Museum at Tiflis proposes to devote to the illustration and explanation of the rich collections under his charge. The present volume—printed in Russian with a German context—contains an account of the zoological specimens in the Museum, which are, of course, mostly from the Caucasus and its environs, though many are from other localities.

Some 150 pages are devoted to the birds, of which there are stated to be 4206 specimens in the Museum, besides eggs and nests. These are referred to 498 species. The sexes and exact localities are given in a general list; after which follows a series of short notes on various species, chiefly those from different parts of the Caucasus. Some of these are in correction or augmentation of the remarks in the author's '*Ornis Caucasica*,' and deserve careful study, for Dr. Radde is known as a 'lumper' rather than a 'splitter' of species, and it is well to hear both sides of the question:—see, for instance, his remarks on the modifications of *Cinclus aquaticus*, *Raticilla mesoleuca*, *Garrulus glandarius*, and other species, in the Caucasus.

62. *Rothschild and Beddard on the Genus Apteryx.*

[The Genus *Apteryx*. By the Hon. Walter Rothschild, Ph.D. With a Chapter on the Anatomy of the Kiwis, by Frank Beddard. Nov. Zool. vi. p. 361.]

In this important memoir Mr. Rothschild has endeavoured to give us the results of his great experience in the examination of specimens of the genus *Apteryx*, both alive and dead, especially of those belonging to the unrivalled collection of these birds which he has succeeded in bringing together. Though we may regret that some of these results are not of a rather more positive character, there can be no question that Mr. Rothschild's account of the species which he is able

to recognize, coupled with Mr. Beddard's notes on their osteology and anatomy, have considerably advanced our knowledge of this somewhat obscure group. Mr. Rothschild now recognizes only five forms of *Apteryx*, two of which he classes as subspecies. These are:—

1. *A. australis*, of Stewart Island and the southern parts of South Island, to which he unites *A. lawryi*.

2. *A. australis mantelli*, of North Island, to which *A. bulleri* Sharpe is referred.

3. *A. haasti*, from the mountain-range on the west coast of South Island.

4. *A. oweni*, from South Island.

5. *A. oweni occidentalis*, from South Island and the southwestern portions of North Island.

Mr. Beddard has made the great discovery that, so far from having no oil-gland (as stated by Garrod, Fürbringer, and Gadow), *Apteryx* has this organ particularly large and well developed. It is an "enormous gland" lying "just above the extremity of the vertebral column." This peculiar structure is well figured by Mr. Beddard, but we regret that he has not given us a rather more complete description of the plate. Mr. Beddard also contributes important information on the osteology and anatomy of these wonderful birds.

63. *Salvadori and Festa on the Birds of Ecuador.*

[Viaggio del Dr. Enrico Festa nell' Ecuador. Uccelli. Parte 1. Passeres oscines. Parte 2. Passeres clamatores. Del T. Salvadori ed E. Festa. Boll. Mus. Zool. Università di Torino, xv. Nos. 357 and 362.]

In these two memoirs we have a full account of the Passeres represented in the great collection of birds made by Dr. E. Festa in Ecuador, which contains altogether 2892 specimens, referable to 610 species. Part 1 treats of the Oscines, of which there are 165 representatives. Of these, five — *Turdus conradi*, *Thryophilus leucopogon*, *Certhiola intermedia*, *Spermophila æquatorialis*, and *Cyanolyca angela* — are characterized as new. Ten others are stated to be new to the avifauna of Ecuador. There are also such

rarities represented as *Entomoidestes coracinus*, *Oreomanes fraseri*, and *Oreothraupis arremonops*.

In the second memoir, in which the Passeres Clamatores are treated, six species out of 180 represented in the collection are described as new. These are *Elainia cinereifrons*, *Pseudomyiobius* (gen. nov.) *annectens*, *Synallaxis subspeciosa*, *Sclerurus salvini*, *Dendrocincla macrorhyncha*, and *Acropternis infuscata*. Seven others are stated to be new to Ecuador, and *Grallaria gigantea* is of great interest as the third known example of this rare species.

64. Seebohm's 'Monograph of the Thrushes.'

[A Monograph of the Turdidae, or Family of Thrushes. By the late Henry Seebohm. Edited and completed (after the Author's death) by R. Bowdler Sharpe, LL.D., F.L.S., &c. Part vii. Imperial 4to. London: Henry Sotheran & Co., 1899.]

The seventh part of this work, issued in December last, concludes the true *Turdi* (according to Seebohm's arrangement), and commences the group of *Merula*. The following species are figured:—*Turdus cabanisi*, *T. milanjensis*, *T. libonyanus*, *T. pelios*, *T. saturatus*, *T. stormsi*, *T. cryptopyrrhus*, *Merula merula*, *M. mandarina*, *M. bouboul*, *M. albicincta*, and *M. torquata* (two plates). A figure of *Merula alpestris*, the Alpine form of the Ring-Ouzel, is deferred until the next number.

65. Stark's *Birds of South Africa*.

[The Fauna of South Africa. Edited by W. L. Selater. The Birds of South Africa. By Arthur C. Stark, M.B. Vol. I. London: Porter, 1900.]

We have now before us the first volume of the work of our much-lamented friend, the late Dr. Stark, on the Birds of South Africa, which forms the first of Mr. W. L. Selater's proposed series of treatises on the fauna of that country. Dr. Stark's introduction is dated at Durban on October 10th, 1899. Thence he proceeded to Ladysmith, to attend on the sick and wounded, and there he met his death on November 18th, as already described in our number for January last (*supra*, p. 220).

The present volume deals with the first half of the birds of the Order Passeres found within the limits assigned to the present work, *i. e.* Africa south of the Zambesi and Cunéu rivers. The author, as he tells us, has endeavoured to arrange the subject-matter in such a manner that a tyro in ornithology may be enabled to identify a specimen with a certain amount of ease and accuracy. The plan and arrangement adopted are based upon those followed by Mr. Eugene Oates in the volumes on "Birds" in the 'Fauna of British India,' viz., a full description, illustrated where necessary, of the characters which define the different genera, followed by a key to the species included in each.

The majority of the descriptions have been taken from specimens in the South African Museum at Cape Town, where there is a good mounted series of South African birds in the public gallery, besides a large named collection in cabinets. The remainder are mostly from examples in the Albany Museum at Grahamstown, the Durban Museum in Natal, and from the author's own collection. The present work is rendered of special value by the author's own field-notes, resulting from his long personal experiences in various parts of the Cape Colony, Natal, and the Transvaal from 1892 to 1898, for in these will be found concise accounts of the general habits, food, song, and nidification of the various species. The perusal of some of these excellent notes leads us to regret more than ever that Stark did not live to complete his work. We fear it will be a very difficult task to arrange the MSS. and journals left behind him so as to finish the work in the same fashion.

So far as we know no previous writer has recorded so clearly the extraordinary breeding-habits of some of the Weaver-birds, which alone among the Passeres seem to be decidedly polygamous. For example, we select Stark's account of the nesting-habits of the Great-tailed Widow-bird (*Coliopasser procne*), which somewhat resemble the proceedings of the Fur-Seals (*Otaria*) among Mammals:—

"As soon as the males begin to assume their long tails in spring the flocks break up, and each male, accompanied by

from ten to fifteen females, repairs to some suitable breeding-place. As soon as they have fixed on a locality, the females separate, and each one proceeds to construct a nest in a thick tuft of grass. The cock meanwhile keeps a look-out from some point of vantage, and spends most of his time in driving off other cocks who attempt to trespass on the territory occupied by his harem. He takes no part in the construction of any of the nests. Should he see a man or beast of prey approaching he flies round with a warning cry, upon which the hens leave their nests, creep under the grass for a short distance, then rise and fly off until danger is past."

Similar habits are related of *Urobrachya axillaris*, *Colio- passer albo-notatus*, and other species of this group.

We observe that *Otocorys berlepschi* is acknowledged as South African in the present volume, but we must confess to grave doubts whether the habitat assigned to this species, "Caffraria," can be correct. The nearest species to it geographically is *O. atlas* of Morocco (Bull. B. O. C. vii. p. xlvii), and it is a "far cry" from Morocco to Caffraria!

Many good illustrations will be found in the text of this volume; those of the male *Promerops* "showing off" and of the nest of the Cape Penduline Tit (*Ægithalus capensis*) are remarkable. It is to be hoped that the remaining volumes of the 'Birds of South Africa' will be completed in a similar style, but to find a second Stark will be no easy matter.

66. Stone on a new *Coccyzus*.

[A new Species of *Coccyzus* from St. Andrews. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Ac. Nat. Sci. Philad. 1899, p. 301.]

St. Andrews Island, in the Caribbean Sea, was already known (see 'Auk,' 1887, p. 177) to possess five peculiar species, out of the 19 of which specimens were obtained by one of Mr. Cory's collectors. Mr. Stone now adds a sixth, *Coccyzus abbotti*, from a small collection made in the island in May 1887 by Dr. W. L. Abbott.

67. *Stone on Birds from Colombia.*

[On a Collection of Birds from the Vicinity of Bogotá, with a Review of the South-American Species of *Speotyto* and *Troglodytes*. By Witmer Stone. Proc. Ac. Nat. Sci. Philad. 1899, p. 302.]

The Academy of Natural Sciences has come into possession of a valuable collection of birds, made near Bogotá and on the surrounding ranges by the late Dr. J. W. Detwiller, with localities attached to the specimens. Mr. Stone now catalogues them, and reviews the S. American species of *Speotyto* and *Troglodytes*. Of the former genus he separates, as a new subspecies, *S. cunicularia tolimæ*; and of the latter he describes, as a new species, *Troglodytes columbæ*.

68. *Witherby on the Birds of South-western Spain.*

[Two Months on the Guadalquivir. By Harry F. Witherby, F.Z.S., M.B.O.U. Reprinted from 'Knowledge,' 1899.]

This is a pleasantly written description of a visit to ground which is already familiar to readers of this Journal; in fact there is now a sort of dragoman who provides boats, lodging, and all accessories for "trippers" to a district which was once "wild" Spain. This was an agreeable "outing"; but we are glad to find that Mr. Witherby has more serious ambitions, and that he has started for Khartoum and the country beyond on the White Nile, accompanied by two experienced collectors.

XXI.—*Letters, Extracts, Notices, &c.*

WE have received the following letters, addressed "to the Editors of 'The Ibis'":—

SIRS,—The January number of 'The Ibis' for the present year contains figures of two birds, recently described by Mr. Weld-Blundell and Lord Lovat in the Bull. B. O. C. vol. x. pp. xix, xx. I think I can easily show that neither of these birds can stand as a new species.

The first bird figured is *Oriolus meneliki* W.-B. & L.,